



*Dr. Mary L. Livers, Deputy Secretary*

It's September and you can feel the fall chill in the air, at least until 9 a.m. anyway, when Louisiana summer takes over again. Still, fall brings a faster-paced season for everyone, it seems. Students from pre-K to graduate school are back in the classroom. The transition from the laid back days of summer to "getting down to business" after Labor Day affects us all, not just children.

There's something about fall that just feels different. The air smells different. The leaves change color, in most places anyway (sorry south Louisiana, where you experience only "summer and February"). When nature puts on fall dress, we all seem to move a little faster, step a little livelier. The smell of fall air takes me back to my childhood. It's a comforting, and comfortable, time of year.

Some of the trees here in the State Police complex have already begun to turn – some are bright yellow. There's more action at the Capitol with meetings on the budget and streamlining government. Yes, it must be fall.

I encourage you to welcome the season and enjoy fall events – ball games, walks along nature trails or your own street or backyard, outdoor cooking with family and friends. Happy September to you all.

**"Doc"**

*Dr. Mary L. Livers*

## Soul Food

An inspirational column by OJJ staff



*Swanson Chaplain*

*Rev. Ricky James*

### Don't Give Up, and Don't Quit

It's easy to quit anything, or give up on things. The difference between a winner and loser is that a winner never gives up, no matter how many times he/she may fail. I remember my fifth grade teacher once said, "If at first you don't succeed, try and try again". She encouraged me not to quit, nor give up.

Paul challenged believers not to give up, and don't quit. He tells them "let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." He said to the church at Galatia, don't get tired of doing the right thing, because, when the time is right, we will reap a harvest of blessings, if we don't give up. I don't know about you, but I am waiting for my harvest to come in!

You know, it is quite discouraging to continue to do the right things, and never receive a word of thanks, or see any tangible results. Paul said in his letter to the Galatians, to keep on doing the right things, and trust the Creator for the results, because in due time, they will reap a divine reward.

Many people who have made a good start in their spiritual experience, have quit for one reason or another. Some have said the Creator has called them to do a certain task, but they have allowed something or someone to distract them, and they gave up. Some have been a wonderful blessing to others through various means and ways, but for some unknown reason, they quit.

Every time a believer quits shouldering their responsibilities and fulfilling their obligations, the devil is laughing. But don't make the devil

laugh. Make him mad, by doing the right thing, and do not give up. He wants you to quit. He wants you to give up. Scripture says "the thief (devil) cometh not but to steal, kill, and to destroy, but I (the savior) am come, that you might have life and have it more abundantly." What if Joshua had quit before the 13<sup>th</sup> trip around the walls of Jericho? What if David had quit before Goliath lay dead at his feet? What if Paul had quit before he preached the gospel to the Gentiles? Don't make the devil laugh, but make him mad. Don't quit, nor give up.

Look, I know the road may be rough, and the hills are hard to climb, but don't give up. I know your load is heavy, and your enemies are closing in, but don't quit. I know the nights are growing dark, and the storms are bad, but don't give up. Just keep on trusting in the Creator. Scripture says, "trust in Him and lean not unto thine own understanding, but in all thy ways, acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."

If you quit, it means you'll lose everything that you've worked for, and everything that you've prayed for. If you quit, it is saying that the Creator is not worthy to be served. It means that sins pay better dividends than the salvation of the Creator. Scripture says "for the wages of sins is death, but the gift of the Creator is eternal life, through the savior." And if you quit it means that his death on the cross was all in vain.

But there are some things that we need to quit. Some things we need to stop, and Paul calls them the lust of the flesh. Scripture says to put off every sin that so easily besets us. Lying, stealing, cheating, hating, backbiting, low-down, dirty and nasty. Stop being ungrateful, unthankful and unlovable. But be satisfied with what He has allowed you to have. When you pull things off, you ought to put something on. No, not the same old things, but put on new things, like Love, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Meekness, Faith and Temperance. The Book says against such, there is no law. I'm humbled to know that the savior didn't give up on me, or you.

**THE DAILY MOTIVATOR**

Even when the day is cold and gray, life can be filled with warmth and joy. In the middle of winter, there is the ever-present promise of spring. When all seems to be lost, there are still ways to turn the situation around or to move on through it anyway.

When there appears to be no hope, someone will have the audacity to be hopeful anyway. More times than not, that person will be right. The greatest opportunities for positive change often arise from the most difficult situations. The most enduring strengths are always forged against the most stubborn challenges.

There are those who give up at the first hint of trouble, and then there are those who never give up no matter what. Those who never give up are the ones who, thankfully, always get us through. -- Ralph Marston

**Transitions...Comings and Goings.....welcome to new members of the OJJ Family:**

**CENTRAL OFFICE**

Shantia Roy, Human Resources Analyst

**JETSON**

Alton Coleman, Jr., Food Prod. Worker  
Angie Paul, Social Service Counselor 2

**HAMMOND**

Aaron Staves, Probation & Parole Officer 1

**NEW ORLEANS**

Douglas Black, Probation & Parole Officer 1  
Daniel Johnson, Prob. & Parole Officer 1  
Daniel Mingea, Prob. & Parole Officer 1

**SHREVEPORT**

Jarred Cram, Probation & Parole Officer 1

**PROMOTIONS****BRIDGE CITY**

Jelata Jordan, Master Sergeant  
Deidre Willis, Master Sergeant

**NEW ORLEANS**

Glenda Bryant, Prob. & Parole Officer 3  
Daphne Johnson, Prob. & Parole Supervisor

**REALLOCATIONS****ALEXANDRIA**

Angelic Johnson-McCray, P & Par. Off. 2  
Rodney McNeal, Prob. & Parole Officer 3

**LAFAYETTE**

Kevin Broussard, Prob. & Parole Officer 3  
Heather Campbell, Prob. & Parole Officer 3  
Kristi Eames, Probation & Parole Officer 3  
Tracy Flores, Probation & Parole Officer 3  
Bret Gould, Probation & Parole Officer 3  
Karla Meranto, Prob. & Parole Officer 3  
Brian Simpson, Prob. & Parole Officer 3  
Michael Waters, Prob. & Parole Officer 3  
Opal West, Probation & Parole Officer 3

**OPELOUSAS**

James Guidry, Probation & Parole Officer 3  
Jason Trahan, Probation & Parole Officer 3

**LAKE CHARLES**

Alexis Heflin, Probation & Parole Officer 3

**NATCHITOCHES**

Joseph Black, Probation & Parole Officer 3  
Jeremy Martin, Prob. & Parole Officer 2

**SWANSON**

Melvin Carr, Corrections Sergeant  
Gregory Gordon, Corrections Sergeant  
Melinda Highshaw, Corrections Sergeant

**REHIRED****BATON ROUGE**

Shalanda Wells, Adm. Coordinator 3

**RETIREMENT****NEW ORLEANS**

Mack Summers, Probation & Parole Supervisor, 19 years of service

*Staff Spotlight on...*

**Justine Aguiar,**  
**Probation and Parole Supervisor, New**  
**Orleans/Jefferson Regional Office**

Valentine's Day, 1992, recent college graduate **Justine Aguiar** began her career with OJJ as a Probation and Parole Officer, and although she is still not quite sure where the idea of working with at-risk kids came from, she has never looked back and has never regretted the unlikely choice for her life's work.

With a degree from USL (now ULL) in physical anthropology, which included a study in forensics, after almost completing her degree in sociology, Justine said her education prepared her well to work with our youth. Physical anthropology teaches how to determine why things happen the way they do, she said, while sociology provides knowledge about human social structure and activity.

"Justine has been with us for 18 years and is a very dependable, dedicated and loyal employee," said **Regional Manager Angela Koenig**, in spotlighting Justine. "She is committed to the population we serve and has always been a team player and is supportive not only to me, but the entire staff. She is an asset to the agency and we are very lucky to have her on our team."

Justine came to OJJ as a Probation and Parole Officer 1. The agency and the profession were undergoing a lot of changes at the time, she said. "At that time, it was strictly social work, and we went through the

transition to partial law enforcement," she said. "Around 2000, POST certification and the requirement to carry weapons became mandatory for new officers. It was very interesting to watch the transition into Protective Services."

"The change from social work to law enforcement can be difficult," Justine said, "but OJJ as an agency worked diligently to make a smooth transition. Both components of the job are important. We, as a whole agency, have handled it well."

"I've seen kids change, crime change, and post-Katrina, more severe offenders in our caseloads and less of the low-level offenders, like truants and ungovernables," Justine added. "We are working with the kids who really need to be worked with. We are concentrating on the more severe offenders. It's much more noticeable since (hurricane) Katrina."

The difference is seen in those who stayed and who came back after the 2005 storm, Justine said. "The aftermath of the storm gave us and the court system a chance to reevaluate our caseloads so that we could provide service to those who really need us," she said. "At this point, we can really concentrate on those who need the help."

"We have great officers here," Justine went on. "Our staff has great relationships with the kids and their families. We are a support system in their lives and we provide whatever services they need. We realize that a lot of kids and their parents could have just disappeared after the storm, but we found they kept in touch. Thanks to **Susie Durrett and the Interstate Compact program**, we were able to maintain contact with a lot of kids who were out of state."

"When you realize that you are making a difference for our clients," Justine said, "you



don't move on to another job; this becomes a part of your life. You don't turn it off in the evening when you go home. You watch the news and hear the names of people...it could be your kid who is a victim."

"The kids in our caseloads often stay connected," Justine went on. "Sometimes one of our kids will call to say hello. They are looking for their PPO and they will speak with me. It's interesting, the way those phone conversations go. We are familiar with their cases and with the kids. And we always keep in mind, they ARE kids. A child in secure care can either become hardened or more childlike, and sometimes they just need someone to talk to. So, we always talk with them. They are our kids."

Justine relates a time when one of her former clients showed up at the office to visit and brought his own children to meet her. "This is a kid who did fantastically well, and it was so heartwarming," she said. "We do hear from our kids who want to let us know how they are doing later in life."

"Because of Katrina, some kids moved across the country," Justine noted. "They never thought they could leave New Orleans and succeed in new places. They never thought about a life outside of New Orleans. Suddenly, they had new experiences and opportunities. In a similar way, I see youth who go on the trips that the Youth Empowerment Project (YEP) provides, and they have the opportunity to see places they never expected to visit. This is so significant. When kids are given the opportunity to experience new things, their brains are stimulated. We should always be looking for something new to keep our minds stimulated."

Justine takes her own advice. Last winter she sent an email to Loyola University to inquire about the Masters program in Criminal

Justice. "The university didn't just provide feedback, they accepted me suddenly," she chuckled, adding that she is attempting to complete her graduate degree in record time. She went into the program almost immediately after that email, and having a last name beginning with the letter A, she was the first in the class to do a presentation that allowed her the opportunity to share her experiences (with notification only the day before). "I discovered that you can share from the heart without a lot of preparation," Justine said. "Maybe there will be a teaching opportunity in the future. I learned that you can get the information out there just by answering questions honestly and by doing a simple presentation."

She added that two members of her class have already inquired about applying for jobs with OJJ. "Wouldn't it be fantastic to have more masters' level people working with us and providing services to the kids?" she exulted. "We should all have the opportunity to further our education."

Cybercrime is a new thing, Justine has learned. "This area can be another part of doing something to help the community. Maybe the next career step is to help get the bad guys who prey on at-risk kids off the street," she said. "Who knows what the possibilities are, the opportunities to catch the bad guys. There are so many ways to help the community. Even when you are ready to do something else, perhaps not working a 40-hour week, working in the area of cybercrime is something you can do part-time and continue to feel that you are needed, and a part of the community." Justine could easily adapt to working on catching cybercrooks, as she also served as a computer analyst for St. Martin's Episcopal School for a number of years.

Having a good support system at home and at work is what makes it possible to survive

the bad days, Justine said. "Family, community, neighbors, and co-workers at the office – you have to know they are all behind you," she said. "Things can change so quickly, at work and in your personal life. We all have bad days, and you can survive them when you can laugh and cry together. We see horrific things happen, and you can come to work knowing that you truly have that type of support. We spend so many hours together, it's an extended support system."

"You need balance," she continued. "When support systems get wobbly, you have to know that things will work themselves out if you do the best you can. You have to remember, everything changes. Bad days get better. If you can't do that, this job will wear you out."

After 18 ½ years with OJJ, Justine is still bemused at her career choice. "I never even knew that juvenile probation and parole services existed," she said, "and I never would have considered it. At the time I was looking into forensics, but there were not a lot of women in the field and there was a hiring freeze."

Living in Baton Rouge, she made a series of contacts that led to the New Orleans OJD (OJJ) office, and everything just started falling into place. "I was able to come back home to New Orleans and work in the community with kids. It ended up being kind of cool," she said.

"When you see the impact you and the office have on the kids, it really makes a difference," Justine said. "You see it all. When I was young, probation and parole was not part of my reality. Who knew?"

"Nobody else in my family has ever done anything like this for a living," Justine said. Her parents were both Ph.D organic

chemistry professors who moved from the north to teach and do research at Tulane University. After Justine's father returned north, her mother remained in New Orleans. Her mother went on to teach at Louise S. McGehee School and to re-marry. She later became an administrator at St. Martin's Episcopal School, from which Justine graduated. Justine's stepfather is a jazz musician.

Graduate school is a big part of Justine's life right now, but she loves to read, and she is a self-described movie buff.

Justine is also heavily invested in the New Orleans arts community and music scene. She started painting in high school and spends time in art galleries and at arts fairs and events. "I enjoy meeting artists and seeing them do different things," Justine said. She enjoys visiting music venues in the Faubourg Marigny and Uptown areas. "There is always something happening in the city if you like music, the arts, and people," she said. "It takes you to another world, so different from work."

"New Orleans doesn't shut down," Justine went on. "There are always big events, often in the evening. I've come to appreciate the city even more since the storm."

After Katrina, Justine joined the Mardi Gras Krewe of Muses. "They have a great parade, but they also have events that raise funds to help others, like victims of domestic violence. The group goes out of its way to make other peoples' lives better. Everything changed after Katrina. Through the krewe, I've met some great women professionals doing great things for the city."

Justine spends both her professional life and her personal life helping people....and meeting the mission every day.

## CQIS POLICY UPDATES

Two new policies have been adopted:  
A.2.15 - Dress Code - Facility and  
Community Services - 8/18/09  
C.2.6 Use of Interventions - Secure Care -  
8/20/09

## Alexandria Regional Office

**PPO3 Rodney McNeal** and his family appreciate the prayers, cards and phone calls that made it easier to get through a very difficult time, when he recently lost his wife. We are glad to have Rodney back at work.

**PPO1 Robert Harris** is attending the Alexandria Police Academy. We wish Robert well.

Staff participated in a Fetal Alcohol Training in August, was presented by staff from the Office of Addictive Disorders.

Six officers attended the Court Testimony Training held in Baton Rouge in August.

Best wishes to **Sandra Ross, Administrative Coordinator 3**, who recently left our office.

## Baton Rouge Regional Office

Kudos to the Baton Rouge OJJ for giving and giving. We recently donated a huge "grab basket" full of games, magazines, crossword puzzles, toys and snacks for **SSC Jennifer Anderson's** son, who had leg surgery and will be unable to walk for several months. Hopefully, we donated enough gifts to keep him busy.



**PPO Cobie Chauvin** requested our support to help a needy family on her caseload make it through some hard times. We donated several everyday household items, gift cards and groceries.

**PPS Joyce Watkins, PPO April Ross-Calvey** and **PPO Wendy Sarnier** participated in a two-day Medicaid training.

Baton Rouge OJJ hosted a farewell luncheon to say good-bye to **PPO Lindsey Keller**.

## Bridge City Center for Youth



*Holly Hammett*

**Attorney Holly Hammett** was originally hired to represent OJJ in matters before the state courts with juvenile jurisdiction. Holly's duties were broadened at the end of 2004 to include other areas of administration including a larger role in staff development, assistance with disciplinary process, assistance in addressing grievances, and EEOC complaints.

As a result, Holly decided to study for certification in Human Resources. She passed the Professional in Human Resource (PHR) examination in June and is certified through the Human Resources Certification Institute (HRCI).

In May, Holly was invited to be a presenter at the 13<sup>TH</sup> Annual Louisiana Appellate Project Seminar at Benedict's Plantation in Mandeville. This was her first experience as a CLE instructor. Holly presented on juvenile law. Among the attendees were criminal defense and appellate attorneys from all over the state.

## BCCY Dorms Have Changed Names

Out with the old and in with the new:

Old Name	New Name
Bacchus	Liberty
Umoja	Destiny
Ujima	Dignity
Nia	Faith
Zulu	Harmony
Zawadi	Hope
Ujamaa	Justice
Imani	Pride
Kuumba	Serenity
Rex	Perseverance



## *Liberty's Kitchen Youth Development Program*

**BCCY Culinary Arts Instructor Chef Ron Sonnier** is looking for people interested in interviewing Culinary Arts students. He created a PowerPoint presentation for Liberty's Kitchen, to provide an idea of what he is doing with at-risk youth in state custody. Chef Sonnier has been with OJJ almost 11 years and he is having great success in recruiting students interested in a career in the culinary arts field.

**Megan Faunce of Liberty's Kitchen** replied: "Thanks Chef. We would definitely be interested in interviewing your students for entrance into our program."

## ASVAB Testing Conducted at BCCY

**April Adams**, Test Coordinator for the New Orleans Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) visited Riverside Alternative School in August to administer the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Test (ASVAB). This test is used for students interested in joining the military. In high school, it is used in conjunction with the Career Exploration Program (CEP), which helps students discover their strengths and weaknesses in professions or careers they are interested in pursuing. Along with the test results, every student receives a workbook detailing different career choices. The workbook can also be used to help as a guide to finding a job or what is needed to pursue a job. Students must be 16 years of age and in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade to be eligible to take the test. However, in schools such as Riverside Alternative Academy, the students have to be 17 years of age in order to take the ASVAB test. To qualify for military enlistment they must have GED or high school diploma.

The test lasted approximately three hours, and the students were really interested and eager to learn what they needed to know. The students asked questions, followed instructions, and paid close attention. Ms. Adams said our BCCY students were the first to follow instructions correctly. Kudos to the students at BCCY for their hard work in meeting the challenge.

Ms. Adams called **Mrs. Dorean Phoenix, Riverside Alternative Principal**, to say that several students passed with extremely high scores, and said some of the scores were the best she had ever seen.





*Youth take the ASVAP*

## BCCY Holds Crazy Hat Day

**By Monique Jones, Adm. Coordinator**

*Thanks to the leadership for having days like this to help keep our spirits up here at BCCY.*

Crazy Hat Day turned out to be a huge success. Staff from all departments participated by wearing their most unique hats. It a real joy to see staff members walk around show casing their most crazy hat. The hats consisted of Chef Hats, Cow Boys/Cow Girls, Mardi Gras Hats, Sport Hats, even a Bride Hat. Overall everyone really enjoyed themselves in addition to having good food.

When it came down to the end, the judges had to make a decision on the best hat. It was a rough decision since employees had some greatly innovative hats. However, the winners of the craziest hats were **Mrs. Guilford from Education, Dora Celestine from Medical, and Janet Benn from Administration.** These ladies did an outstanding job, displaying creativity, talent, time, and skills.

When I heard there was going to be Crazy Hat Day at BCCY, I knew it was going to be fun. I immediately began thinking of a way to create a special but unique hat. At home, I took my collection of miniature hats, along with my husband's cap and placed my miniature hats on top of the cap. I added a few flowers here and there for the final touch. There it was, my CRAZY HAT! My crazy hat was easy to create. Before I began, I decided on a theme. To make it fun to view and wear, I decorated my hat according to some of the things I do daily, my work time

activities and my fun/leisure activities. My work activities involve nursing so I used supplies like band-aids, bandages, ointment, gloves, and etc. My fun/leisure activities include reading, traveling, shopping and attending church. For this, I gathered a book, jewelry, lipsticks, coins, etc. Once I had all my items, I began gluing them on my hat using a hot glue gun.

"This hat was truly an original, from the making of the hat I could tell it took creativity and imagination," said **Tracy Clayton.**

**BCCY Employees Eddie Newsome, Carolyn Dillon, Jelata Jordan, Darvonya Smith, and Veronica George (left to right) enjoy displaying their Crazy Hats.**



*Monique Jones, left, and Tracey Clayton enjoy Crazy Hat Day.*



*Chef Ron and Mrs. Mitzi Sonnier.*



*Ms. Guilford, Education, winner of an Appleby's Gift Card*



*Left, Dora Celestine of Medical, winner of a fruit basket. Right, Janet Benn, Administration*

will be the young men of today—men like you who are preparing now for the great future which lies ahead. You may view the future with confidence, knowing that from the youth of today will emerge the leaders of tomorrow.”

### BCCY Youth Enjoy Fishing Trip

The JUMP team escorted seven youth to Hopedale Louisiana for a fishing trip. The youth spent their day fishing and crabbing. It is believed that the youth broke the BCCY fishing record catching a total of seven fish (the previous record was 2), and seven crabs.

Each youth enjoyed the trip and had trouble leaving because the fish really started biting when it was time to pack up. The youth escorted on this trip have shown a pattern of good behavior over the past months, and are dedicated to maintaining the same level of program participation in the future

### Central Office

**Program Manager Melba Oubre** was a presenter at the recent AMIkids conference held in Alexandria. Melba addressed the partnership between AMIkids and OJJ, and she discussed OJJ's mission, vision and guiding principles. She talked about how each agency should share the mission and vision, which is to reach out to our young people. The two main points Melba touched on were "teamwork" and the "true measure of success", not so much what we achieve or accomplish, which is good, but at the end of the day, "have we made a difference in someone's life"? Melba talked about the importance of staying focused on our goals, no matter how frustrated we may get, sharing the example of Henry Ford going bankrupt several times before being known for inventing the famous Model T.

Melba closed with a quote from Thomas J. Watson: "The business leaders of tomorrow

### Congratulations

**Deputy Compact Administrator Susie Durrett**, has a new grandson, Colt Mitchell Sawyer, was born in July, weighing 6 lbs, 3 oz. Colt's parents are Susie's son and daughter-in-law, **Mitchell and Danielle Sawyer** of Lake Charles.

### OJJ is Featured in CJCA/PbS Newsletter



The August issue of CJCA's (Council of Juvenile Corrections Administrators) PbS Newsletter featured a story by OJJ's CQIS team, below.

"We at the Louisiana Office of Juvenile Justice (OJJ) feel that the success of a facility or program is largely related to how well program operations meet the agency's mission, vision and guiding principles. In 2006, OJJ became involved with Performance-based Standards (PbS) and incorporated the PbS data collection process into the agency's existing Continuous Quality Improvement Services (CQIS) program. PbS was a perfect fit for the already established quality assurance program. The purpose of integrating PbS processes into the CQIS program was to regulate and efficiently monitor programs and services ensuring quality standards that promote healthy outcomes for the youth in custody.

The CQIS staff facilitates quarterly secure care reviews that focus on indicators relative to treatment services to ensure individualized treatment plans are in place and that the

identified goals and objectives are attainable and being met. Additionally, bi-annually we focus on areas of facility operations linked to administration, safety and security, education, food services, investigative services and staff development. OJJ incorporated the PbS Expected Practices and Processes into these quarterly and bi-annual reviews to assist staff in assessing the quality of facility operations. These indicators help identify and monitor particular need areas to be addressed in order to achieve the agency's maximum operational potential. Additionally, a larger, more comprehensive quality assurance review meeting is conducted twice a year that incorporates the quarterly reviews, the bi-annual reviews and the PbS data collection results. CQIS staff members analyze and present outcome measures to Executive Staff, facility directors and facility staff. Facility and central office staff review and adjust Facility Improvement Plans (FIPs) and develop action plans to continue the improvement of services to youth. We have found that the collaborative effort of the team at OJJ as well as the parallel between PbS and CQIS is a winning combination."



*Pictured left to right: Angela Arabie, Program Manager, Katie Kirkpatrick, Program Coordinator, Debbie Linder, Executive Management Officer and Lynne Geromini, Administrative Program Director*

### **Morale committee kicks off Labor Day celebration and fall football at the same time**

The ever-busy Morale Committee put on a terrific spread of munchies and snacks to put

everyone into the holiday spirit. The staff enjoyed hot and cold goodies and chips, meatballs, etc. Thanks to members **Katherine Abrams, Marvel Adams, Clarett Blount, Anne Carter, Suzie Durrett, Nita Franklin-Shanklin, Nykisha Franklin, Shirley Jackson, Kimberly Jones, Katie Kirkpatrick, Phyllis Martello, Gail Miller, Glenda Ratcliff, Terri Scott, and Shaeki Shanklin.**

### **Hammond Regional Office**

**PPO2 Opal West** transferred to the Lafayette OJJ Regional office in July.

### **Welcome to new staff**

Hammond OJJ welcomed new PPOs and one new Transport Officer. **PPOs Tara Gotch-Hookfin, Jenna Hill and Aaron Staves** joined the Hammond OJJ team, along with **Transport Officer Reginald Bryant.**

### **Congratulations**

Hammond OJJ staff was recertified in CPR in August.

### **Thanks to our PPOs**

PPS **Dawnita Hodge** and PPOs **Mark Benton, Jenna Hill, and Tara Hookfin** attended a Back to School Resource Fair at Hammond Westside Elementary. The event was organized by the Clerk of Court's office and was held so parents and youth could get information on programs in the community, review immunization records, and register for school. School officials attended to ensure children were properly enrolled. Hammond OJJ staff who attended handed out pizza and drinks to the youth, assisted with crowd control, helped set up tables, and answered any questions about probation. Children were given a backpack with school supplies for their attendance.

### **Searching For a Cure in Boston because "Everyone Deserves a Lifetime"**

Several months ago, **PPO1 Brett Netto** was



approached by his then fiancée and now wife, Libbie, about going to Boston, Massachusetts, to support the fight against breast cancer by walking 60 miles in three days. They agreed to help the cause in honor of several of Libbie's friends who have been diagnosed with breast cancer within the last five years. Libbie signed up as a walker and Brett signed up as a crew member on the sweep team. The sweep team drives the route and picks up walkers who cannot make the next pit stop and brings them to the pit stop.

In order to participate, each walker had to raise \$2,300 prior to the event. While crew members are not required to raise donations, they are encouraged to raise whatever donations they can. Libbie was able to raise \$3,000 through an email, mail out, and Facebook campaign.

After several months of training, the time finally arrived for the Nettos to make the trip to Boston. They arrived early and were able to spend a day seeing attractions such as Fenway Park, the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum and Harvard University.

The morning of the first day of the walk was not a great start. It rained for the first six hours and by the time the sun came out, many walkers were suffering from blisters because of wet socks and shoes. The 19.7 mile route took walkers through the towns of Framingham, Wellesley and Waltham. Day 1 ended with all the walkers entering camp. Camp was on the practice field of a local boarding school, with pink tents everywhere.

The weather was much better for Day 2. The route was 22 miles, which highlighted the towns of Belmont, Arlington, Woburn and Lexington. After a long day, including a steep hill three miles into the walk, many walkers welcomed the comfort of their pink homes away from home.

Day 3 started with lots of energy from the walkers. This 16.5 mile route took the walkers through Cambridge and the campus of Harvard University. They also walked

through the campus of MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and crossed the Charles River into downtown Boston. After going through the Boston Commons and public gardens, walkers walked along the shoreline of Boston Harbor past the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum and onto the campus of the University of Massachusetts at Boston for closing ceremonies.

Boston is the first city of 11 cities that the Susan G. Komen Foundation uses for the three-day walks. Participants in the Boston walk raised over \$4 million towards research. For more information on the event or future walks visit <http://www.the3day.org>

The Nettos are planning on walking again in 2010 because "Everyone Deserves a Lifetime."



*PO Brett Netto and his wife, Libbie Sonnier-Netto (Louisiana Department of Education) at the closing ceremonies of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer 3 Day Walk in Boston, Massachusetts.*

## Jetson Center for Youth

Jetson is proud to recognize its Employees of the Quarter.



**Harrette Hunt,**  
**Corrections Juvenile Food Production Worker - Support Employee of the Quarter**



Ms. Hunt has worked at Jetson for five years. She is very professional and has excellent interpersonal skills with staff as well as the youth. Ms. Hunt is always willing to help, no matter how hard the job may be or short the notice. She is a very dedicated worker and an excellent cook.



**Beverly Everson,  
Administrative Coordinator 3 -  
Administrative Employee of the Quarter**

Ms. Everson supports the LA Mod process by assisting employees in Human Resource matters. During the second quarter of 2009, she was the sole employee in the Human Resource Office. She diligently entered all personnel time accurately and timely, while providing assistance to JCY staff. She ensured that matters needing attention were forwarded to the central office Human Resources Office.



**Dexter James, Social  
Services Counselor 2 - Treatment Employee  
of the Quarter**

Mr. James has been with Jetson approximately two years. Initially hired as a YouthCare Worker, he has since been promoted to a Social Services Counselor 2. Mr. James is assigned to one of the most demanding dormitories at Jetson. He interacts well with the youth and provides the

services they need. Mr. James is a dedicated worker and stays focused on the work at hand.



**Major James Spears -  
Supervisor of the Quarter**

Major Spears is one of the most dependable, hardworking, and dedicated employees at Jetson, according to **Director Daron Brown**. No matter what tasks are assigned to him, he performs them willingly. Major Spears is an excellent role model for the youth. He stands behind them, pushing them and motivating them to do what is right. Major Spears communicates well, fosters a safe environment and cooperates with all disciplines. He supports the LA Mod process and holds his subordinates accountable to it.



**Sgt. Kantrelle Stewart -  
YouthCare Worker of the Quarter**

Sgt. Stewart has been employed at Jetson for approximately eight years. Sgt. Stewart performs his assignments in a professional manner, and has good relationship with the youth. He adjusts well to changes in his assignments. Sgt. Stewart was recently assigned to the behavioral management unit and is ever vigilant in the performance of his duties.



**Dwayne J. Nedie,**  
Instructor - Education Employee of the  
Quarter

Mr. Nedie has been employed at Jetson for Youth approximately two and a half years. He has made great steps in teaching the youth and brings a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm, and professionalism to the classroom. He communicates well and has earned the respect of the youth and staff. Mr. Nedie uses work materials and lessons to enhance his overall ability to teach youth effectively.

### **Jetson Choir celebrates with Family and Friends**

The JCY Choir, under the direction of **M/Sgt. Frances Bailey** and **Mr. Ben Groover, LSUHSC Social Worker**, performed at the annual Family and Friends Day at St. Luke Family Christian Center in Plaquemine, where **Bishop Samuel Butler, JCY Education staff**, is the pastor. As always, the choir did an outstanding job. They were treated to a wonderful luncheon of boiled seafood, fried and barbecued chicken, delicious cracklins, jambalaya, beans, scrumptious pralines, pies and cakes, and the list goes on. The youth were allowed to eat as much as they wanted, and they did just that. Several area families attended the event and praised the kids for their participation in the choir and for how well they performed. We were especially proud to see the youth interact with the families on such an occasion.

A special thanks to **Bishop Butler** and the St. Luke family for inviting our youth to participate.

The choir traveled to Union Antioch Baptist Church in Zachary, under the leadership of **Mr. Ben Groover, LSUHSC Social Worker**, who also serves as the church pastor. They celebrated Family and Friends Day with glorious singing and praises to the Lord. The JCY Choir was the special guest. The choir included youth, as well as medical staff, education staff, YouthCare Workers, counselors and administrative staff. One of the ministers who had been incarcerated gave a heartfelt message to our youth. He told them that "they were going through a minor setback for a major comeback." He talked about his life in prison, as he understands what our youth are going through. He encouraged them to get their lives in order, and as he put it, "to get to know Jesus." **M/Sgt. Frances Bailey** says she looked around and saw that our youth and staff were touched because there wasn't a dry eye in the choir. Other deacons and church members who sat in the pews with their sharp suits and shiny shoes had also walked in the prison halls. As we exited the choir stand, these mighty men stood and gave each youth a hug and told them they loved them. It was an emotional day, and a joyous one.

A special thanks to **Pastor Groover** and the Union Antioch family. This is what family is all about. Love one another as I love you. – John 15:12. The only reward of virtue is virtue; the only way to have a friend is to be one. – Ralph Waldo Emerson

### **Hard Work Pays Off!**

JCY staff treated their working youth to a meal at Ryan's Steak House. The JCY Ground Crew enjoyed a delicious buffet at the restaurant in Zachary. Fourteen youth and nine Social Services and Security staff, as well as **Director Daron Brown**, attended the event. The youth had worked very hard keeping the Jetson grounds looking good, and we wanted to them to know how much they are appreciated. The youth enjoyed lots of storytelling and laughs as they made their way to and from the buffet. The youth really

enjoyed the trip. For some of our youth, this was their first off-campus trip. Three of our new Social Service staff also went on their first off-campus trip with the youth.

#### **WE ARE CHANGING KIDS' LIVES AT OJJ!**

## **Lafayette/Opelousas Regional Office**

### **Congratulations**

**St. Mary PPO Michelle Deshotel** was chosen as the **August 2009 Employee of the Month**.

**PPOs Kevin Broussard, Heather Campbell, Kristi Credeur, Tracy Flores, Bret Gould, Karla Meranto, Brian Simpson, Mike Waters and Opal West** from Lafayette and **PPOs Jimmy Guidry and Jason Trahan** from Opelousas were reallocated from PPO2 to PPO3.

The St. Mary Parish Unit hosted a lunch at the Lafayette OJJ in August to show its appreciation for the hard work and dedication of its supervisor, **PPS Steve Neef**. The menu was lasagna with salad and dessert, provided by St. Mary Parish **PPOs Karla Meranto, Paige Sieber and Michelle Deshotel**.

St. Mary Parish **PPO Paige Sieber** and Vermilion Parish **PPO Jason McRaney** started the St. Martin Parish Sheriff's Office POST Academy in August. We wish them the best of luck, and know they will do us proud.

**PPOs George Hebert and Kalen Smith** from Lafayette, and **PPO Scott Peyton** from Opelousas completed their 40-hour PPCT certification in August.

To better meet the OJJ mission, the St. Martin Parish Unit attended MST training at the Lafayette OJJ in August, to learn about new services being offered in the St. Martin Parish area.

Lafayette OJJ welcomes home Lafayette Parish **PPO Mina Travis**, who returned from six weeks of treatment at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Texas, in her battle with breast cancer.

The Lafayette Unit graciously provided a doughnut breakfast for the Lafayette OJJ Office in August.

Life Changing Solutions, an MST provider, hosted a seminar on a general overview of their services at the Lafayette Holiday Inn Express. Several Lafayette OJJ officers attended, and came away with a great deal of information.

## **Lake Charles Regional Office**

### **OJJ Employment Anniversaries**

**Regional Manager Ann Vick** - 38 years!  
**Transport Officer Patrick Broussard** – 2 years  
**PPO3 Delisa Clark** - 12 years  
**PPO2 Alexis Heflin** - 3 years

### **Congratulations**

**PPO2 Alexis Heflin** was recently promoted to PPO3.

**PPS Ken Vidrine** and **PPO Angela Stevens** both recently purchased beautiful new personal vehicles.

**PPO Hollie Comeaux** passed all of the POST Academy Physical Standards Pretests! Best of luck to you, Hollie, as you begin the POST Academy in September.

**Administrative Coordinator 3 Erline Pierce, PPO1 Angie Stevens, and PPO1 Hollie Comeaux** completed Medicaid training so they will be able to assist clients in completing Medicaid applications.



## Thanks!

Thank you to **PPO Monet Newman** and **PPO Angie Stevens** for writing a charter and opening a fundraising checking account for monies to provide incentives for probationers.

**Social Worker Janice Manuel** voluntarily attended Jokes, Jazz, and Desserts, an after-hours fund raiser for ETC.

**PPS Ken Vidrine** attended an ORM Training in August.

**PPS Melissa Cross** attended a committee meeting to review annual stats of our JDAI Detention Risk Assessment Instrument. The screening form yielded 99.95% successful results. Out of 238 kids screened over the year, only two failed to appear in court after being released by this screening document. We are proud of our efforts thus far!

## Our New Building Takes Shape

Lake Charles OJJ is EXTREMELY EXCITED to watch the daily progression in the construction of our new office building! The dirt has been laid, and the elevation is higher than all surrounding buildings. (we hope this will prevent future flooding) We have an extremely thick concrete slab, and our walls are being erected and insulated.



*The Lake Charles OJJ office building is under construction.*

## Annual Defensive Tactics Training Completed

The entire Lake Charles OJJ office participated in 16 hours of PPCT Annual Defensive Tactics Training, and all passed the recertification process. Thanks to our **PPCT Instructor, Fred Fontenot**, for his patience and willingness to be bruised during weapons retention drills. During breaks, **Transport Officer Patrick Broussard** showed off his splits and toe-touches!



*Transport Officer Patrick Broussard*



*PPO3 Karli Pullard*



*Angie Stevens and Hollie Comeaux*



*PPCT Training*



## Monroe Regional Office

August has been a busy month. We had range days at the Richland Parish Firing Range where we practiced and qualified with our firearms, and we had Defensive Tactics recertifications.

Three officers left for the POST Academy: **PPO1 Crale Phillips**, **PPO1 Amanda Wilhite** and **PPO1 Garner Brass**. Good luck, guys! We know you'll bring home the gold!

We are enjoying our last month with **PPO2 Don Hamler** and **Adm. Coordinator 3 Brenda Dupriest**, who are planning to retire in September. We sure will miss them!

**PPS Linda Williams**, **Administrative Assistant Diann Dixon** and **PPO2 Hannah Dozier** attended Medical Application Training.

Monroe OJJ hosted and participated in Courtroom Testimony Training, along with Tallulah OJJ, SCY staff and several others. All Probation Officers, Supervisors, Regional Managers and SCY staff were invited and many attended. OJJ **Attorney Nancy Snow**, along with Fourth Judicial Court/Assistant District **Attorney Johnny Sanders** provided information on courtroom demeanor and courtroom testimony.

## Natchitoches Regional Office

Our office was privileged to have visits from staff from central office, and the regional offices in Alexandria, Opelousas and Shreveport during our audit. Our staff provided refreshments to all visiting staff.

## Employee Recognized for Going Above and Beyond



***PPO3 Sederick Smith***

Natchitoches OJJ recognizes a staff member each month who has gone above and beyond their duties to meet the mission. **PPO3 Sederick Smith** was chosen by his peers for his loyalty and commitment to our youth and their families. Mr. Smith is respected by his peers, judges, facility faculty and community leaders. His hard work and dedication are assets to Natchitoches OJJ and reflect the mission of the Office of Juvenile Justice.

## New Orleans/Jefferson Regional Office

### Congratulations

**PPO2 Glenda Bryant** promoted to **PPO3**  
**PPO2 Daphne Johnson** promoted **PPS**  
**PPO3 Nikita White** promoted **PPS**  
**PPS Yezette White** promoted to Program Specialist

**PPS Mack Summers** officially retired on August 1, 2009 with 25 years of service. Mack has been a valued member of the Orleans OJJ staff and continues to fill a portion of his retirement time serving youth with severe mental disabilities.

**PPO1 Tanice Henley** and **PPO1 Darlinta Cook** graduated from the Slidell POST Academy.

**Adm. Coordinator 2 Karen Ragan's** daughter **Holli Ragan** made the Dean's List at Delgado Community College this semester. Holli, who is majoring in Radiology, has recently enrolled in some art classes and seems to have a real talent for it. She also volunteers at Ochsner Hospital in the Radiology Department. Smart, artistic and caring, keep up the good work Holli!



*Artwork by Holli Ragan.*

## Shreveport Regional Office

### Congratulations

**PPO3 Steve Martino** was named our August Employee of the Month. Thanks for all of the hard work!

Our monthly staff meeting was a bright and cheery one. Four officers were recognized for their outstanding attitude and awarded a Hershey Bar. Those officers were **PPO1 Brandy Stratton**, **PPO2 Nitasha Gibson**, **PPO1 Fabrecia Roberson** and **PPO1 LaNita Lars**. Thanks, ladies, for your great attitudes and willingness to take on extra tasks with a smile!

WooHoo! We survived our audit held in August! Breathe everyone, breathe!

### Welcome to our new members

Shreveport OJJ would like to welcome our newest Officer, **PPO1 Jarred Cram**.

We have a new addition to our Shreveport family! **PPO3 Natalie Pope** had a baby boy on August 7. **David Garrett Pope** was born weighing 6 lbs, 7oz and was 19 inches long. Mother and baby are doing great! Congratulations, Natalie!

Several of our officers attended Court Testimony Training in Monroe, presented by **DA Johnny Sanders** and our very own OJJ Attorney **Nancy Snow**. A big thanks goes to the presenters for the very informative afternoon.

Shreveport OJJ held a baby shower for **PPO2 Kristen McKee**, complete with sandwiches, chips and dip, cake, and lots of gifts. Kristen is due to have a baby girl on October 2.

## Swanson Center for Youth

**SCY Interim Director Debbie Linder** shares a letter received from Habitat from Humanity of Ouachita:

Dear Ms. Linder:

On behalf of Habitat for Humanity of Ouachita, I would like to thank you, your staff and the students of the carpentry class for the assistance in the construction of four homes, on our current project. We look forward to a continued relationship with Swanson Center for Youth, as I believe both organizations benefit greatly.

At this time, we are interested in taking this relationship a step farther, by offering employment to one of your students, **John K.** This young man has exhibited abilities, work ethics and a teachability that we look for in an employee. The environment we can provide at Habitat for Humanity of Ouachita will not only allow him to continue his training in the construction field, but also to grow and mature personally. We are a Christian ministry and offer a unique opportunity for spiritual maturity as well. John is a young man that Swanson and Habitat can be proud of, as he represents both organizations.

I, personally, would be interested in pursuing other funding to expand this program and see more students have this opportunity. I believe if you're going to go, go big, but at the same

time I “despise not the day of small beginnings.”

Your consideration and assistance in this matter will be greatly appreciated and surely we will all see good fruit for our labor. Thank you for the work that you do for these youth, they deserve out best effort.

Be Blessed,  
Fred C. Caldwell, Jr.  
Construction Superintendent  
Habitat for Humanity of Ouachita

### Youth Attend Community Events

An off-campus trip to an Old Fashion Baptism in the River was a success. Eleven youth attended the service, escorted by SCY Staff **Eric Hanley, Gwen Gene, Demita Ford** and **Chaplain Ricky James**. The event began with a fish fry, french fries and bottled water. Attendees ate by the river on a sandy beach near the Forsythe Park Boat Dock. There were approximately 300 to 400 people in attendance, with 25 candidates for baptism. This was quite an experience for our youth and staff, because while some have witnessed baptisms, most of us have never experienced a river baptism. The atmosphere was electrifying and filled with the presence of the Spirit of God. Our youth were recognized and blessed by **Dr. John Avant**, pastor of First Baptist Church of West Monroe, who was the sponsor of this event.



*Old Fashion River Baptism*

**Youth Zachary D. and Youth Charles J.** were escorted by **Chaplain Ricky James** and **Officers Taiesha Jamerson and Andrea Hunt** to the King Ollie Baptist Church in Monroe. The SCY youth spoke to the church's youth group of 60-70 children of all different ages. Zachary and Charles described what it's like to be in a secure facility and the differences in being home and “locked-up”. Our youth were treated to a pizza meal with the youth group.

### Youth Rout Staff in Youth/Staff Softball Game

The recreation department hosted our annual Youth vs. Staff softball game in August 7. The youth were very excited to play the staff. Much to the staff's dismay the youth led the game through all five innings. The youth took the win with a score of 22-3. Staff from all departments participated, and we thank them for all they did (or didn't do).



*Zach D. at bat.*



*The SCY softball stars.*



*Josh and Cedric*



## Youth Participate in Relay for Life Event



*Sarah Chappuis of Relay for Life, presents a Swanson youth with a certificate for his assistance.*



*Sarah Chappuis, left, watches as Kimberly Peters places a banner on Cynthia Williams.*



*Kimberly Peters, LSU Health System, Swanson, right, with Cynthia Williams, who is just starting her fight with cancer. The ceremony was part of a community event at Swanson. Swanson students have been helping in several different ways to raise funds for Relay for life.*

## Tallulah Regional Office

### Congratulations

**PPO2 Kim Green** was promoted to PPO 3.

**PPO Janet Pierce** is attending the North Louisiana Criminal Justice Academy in Benton. GOOD LUCK!

## Thibodaux Regional Office

### Congratulations

**PPO3 Keith Kotoski** was selected **Employee of the Month** for August.

**PPO1 Tressa Gros** and **PPO1 Jamie Hebert** completed the POST Academy in August.

**Administrative Coordinators Kim Foret and Theresa Molliere, and PPO3 Allison Lirette** completed the Medicaid Applications Training in Baton Rouge

It is with great sadness that we report that **PPO3 Keith Kotoski's mother, Mary Kay Kotoski**, died recently in her hometown in Pennsylvania. Please keep Keith and his family in your prayers.



### ***Perception ... something to think about...***



Washington, DC Metro Station on a cold January morning in 2007. The man with a violin played six Bach pieces for about 45 minutes.

During that time approx. two thousand people went through the station, most of them on their way to work. After three minutes a middle aged man noticed there was a musician playing. He slowed his pace and stopped for a few seconds and then hurried to meet his schedule.

#### *4 minutes later:*

The violinist received his first dollar: a woman threw the money in the hat and, without stopping, continued to walk...

#### *6 minutes:*

A young man leaned against the wall to listen to him, then looked at his watch and started to walk again...

#### *10 minutes:*

A 3-year old boy stopped but his mother tugged him along hurriedly. The kid stopped to look at the violinist again, but the mother pushed hard and the child continued to walk, turning his head all the time. This action was repeated by several other children. Every parent, without exception, forced their children to move on quickly.

#### *45 minutes:*

The musician played continuously. Only six people stopped and listened for a short while. About 20 gave money but continued to walk

at their normal pace. The man collected a total of \$32.

#### *1 hour:*

He finished playing and silence took over. No one noticed. No one applauded, nor was there any recognition.

No one knew this, but the violinist was Joshua Bell, one of the greatest musicians in the world. He played one of the most intricate pieces ever written, with a violin worth \$3.5 million dollars. Two days before, Joshua Bell sold out a theater in Boston where the seats averaged \$100.

This is a true story.

Joshua Bell playing incognito in the metro station was organized by the Washington Post as part of a social experiment about perception, taste and people's priorities. *The questions raised: in a common place environment at an inappropriate hour, do we perceive beauty? Do we stop to appreciate it? Do we recognize talent in an unexpected context?*

One possible conclusion reached from this experiment could be this: If we do not have a moment to stop and listen to one of the best musicians in the world, playing some of the finest music ever written, with one of the most beautiful instruments ever made ...

How many other things are we missing?

Editor's Note: This story is flying around the internet. It checked out on [www.Snopes.com](http://www.Snopes.com) and other fact-checking sites. It's real. You can read the entire story on Snopes. - JMG  
<http://www.snopes.com/music/artists/bell.asp>

# The Inside Scoop...of OJJ

*The Inside Scoop...of OJJ* is published monthly to communicate with and about OJJ staff in offices and facilities throughout the state, about agency activities, happenings and items of interest.

*The Inside Scoop...of OJJ* is produced by the Central Office with input from staff statewide.

...until next month

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